

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T STATE 066151

EXDIS

E. O. 11652 - XGDS

TAGS: MASS, KU, JO

SUBJECT: JORDAN' S ANTICIPATED RESPONSE KUWAIT REQUEST FOR  
AIR COVER

REF: A. AMMAN 1781; B. AMMAN 1792

1. IN SEPTEL, WE CONVEYING OUR RESPONSE TO KUWAITI REQUEST  
FOR USG ADVICE ON FASTEST POSSIBLE WAYS TO ACHIEVE AIR  
COVER. WE BELIEVE KUWAITIS ARE LOOKING AT VARIOUS OPTIONS  
TO STRENGTHEN THEIR NEGOTIATING POSTURE VIS- A- VIS IRAQ.  
IN RESPONSE PARA 6 REF ( B), FOLLOWING IS OUR CURRENT ASSESS-  
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MENT OF PRESENT KUWAIT/ IRAQ DISPUTE AND SOVIET INTENTIONS  
WHICH YOU MAY CONVEY TO GOJ:

A. IRAQI FORCES MAY HAVE WITHDRAWN SOMEWHAT FROM KUWAITI TERRITORY THEY HAD OCCUPIED BUT REMAIN IN GOOD POSITION TO RETURN QUICKLY. THIS TOKEN WITHDRAWAL, IF CONFIRMED AND MAINTAINED, MAY FACILITATE GOK WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH IRAQI TEAM WHICH VISITING KUWAIT FOR NEGOTIATIONS. KUWAITIS HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED LATTER COULD NOT TAKE PLACE WHILE IRAQI TROOPS STILL ON THEIR SOIL.

B. IRAQ WANTS EXPANDED CONTROL OVER DEEP WATER ACCESS TO UMM QASR FOR ECONOMIC ( OIL EXPORT) AS WELL AS MILITARY

REASONS. UMM QASR IS GRADUALLY REPLACING BASRA AS IRAQ' S CHIEF GATEWAY TO GULF AND IS ITS PRINCIPAL NAVAL BASE. IRAQ IS LIKELY TO CLAIM BOTH WARBA AND BUBIYAN ISLANDS AT OUTSET OF NEGOTIATIONS.

C. KUWAIT HOPES MEDIATION EFFORTS BY RIAD, ZAYYAT, KHADDAM AND ARAFAT WILL ASSIST THEM IN FACE- TO- FACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAQIS EVEN THOUGH POSITIONS OF TWO GOVERNMENTS REMAIN FAR APART. IF TALKS WITH IRAQIS UNPRODUCTIVE, KUWAITIS WILL PROBABLY TAKE DISPUTE TO ARAB LEAGUE FORUM IN CAIRO IN EFFORT REESTABLISH LEAGUE' S 1961 GUARANTEE OF KUWAITI SOVEREIGNTY. THIS 1961 COMMITMENT IS ONE OF FEW INSTANCES WHEN ARAB LEAGUE ABLE RE-SOLVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DISPUTING ARAB STATES.

D. IF ALL THESE MEANS FAIL, KUWAITIS MAY SEEK TO RESIST. THEY ARE THEN LIKELY TO ASK FOR OUTSIDE HELP AND MAKE USE OF THEIR FINANCIAL POWER. WE DOUBT THEY WILL WANT FOREIGN AIR AND GROUND FORCES TO COME TO THEIR SUPPORT NOW REPEAT NOW, BUT SUCH A SITUATION COULD POSSIBLY ARISE IF OTHER CHANNELS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT CLOSE.

E. RE SOVIET INTENTIONS, RUSSIANS HAVE LONG- RANGE GOAL OF IMPROVING THEIR POSITION IN ARABIAN PENINSULA AND GULF BUT WE DOUBT THEY MASTERMINDING IRAQI AND  
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PDRY ACTIONS. WE BELIEVE SOVIETS WELL AWARE THAT AN

ATTACK BY STATES CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THEM RUNS THE RISK OF SETTING BACK THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE MADE WITH IRAN AS WELL AS PLACE STRAINS ON U. S.- SOVIET RELATIONS, WHICH FOR MANY REASONS THEY HAVE AN INTEREST IN AVOIDING AT PRESENT TIME.

2. YOU SHOULD TELL KING HUSSEIN THAT WE SEE OPPORTUNITY, NOW THAT GOK HAS TURNED TO US FOR ADVICE, TO SEEK TO STEER KUWAIT TO MORE REALISTIC COURSE OF SUPPORTING POSITION OF ARAB MODERATES INSTEAD OF CONTINUING ITS PAST FENCE- STRADDLING POLICIES. WE INTEND TO BE RESPONSIVE TO RECENT REQUESTS FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND ADVICE AND THEREBY INDICATE OUR INTEREST IN KUWAIT'S CONTINUED INDEPENDENCE, WHILE AT SAME TIME ENCOURAGING SUCH REORIENTATION OF KUWAITI POLICY. WE WILL, OF COURSE, WELCOME ANY FEASIBLE STEPS WHICH JORDAN AND KUWAIT CAN WORK OUT IF GOK SHOULD AT SOME FUTURE TIME SEEK JORDANIAN MILITARY PRESENCE ON KUWAITI SOIL. GOJ, HOWEVER, WOULD NEED LOOK TO GOK TO COVER COSTS ANY SUCH OPERATION, INCLUDING REPLACEMENTS FOR U. S.- PROVIDED AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE LOST OR EXPENDED IN OPERATIONS IN KUWAIT.

3. WE RECOGNIZE STRONG DESIRABILITY OF ANY JORDANIAN ACTION IN SUPPORT OF KUWAIT BEING PARALLELED BY SIMILAR ACTIONS BY OTHER ARABS, ESPECIALLY SAUDI ARABIA. SAUDI AIR CAPABILITIES ARE PRESENTLY LIMITED AND STRAINED BY SAUDIS' NEED TO PROVIDE INCREASED AIR SUPPORT FOR ITS OWN AND POSSIBLY YEMENI FORCES IN THE SOUTH WHERE PDY HAS ALSO BEEN CREATING TROUBLES. HOWEVER, SOME SAUDI GROUND PRESENCE MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT EITHER TO KUWAIT OR ALONG SAUDI- IRAQI BORDER. ROGERS

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* EXDIS

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* SECRET

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JIDDA  
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